



West Bank Situation Report

April 19, 2024

Background

Information about the ongoing war in Gaza and escalations in the West Bank is summarized in Anera's last [Palestine Situation Report \(March 2024\)](#).

Overview

The landlocked West Bank — the larger of the two contemporary Palestinian territories, covering an area of 5,860 square kilometers — is home to approximately three million Palestinians.

Between October 7, 2023, and March 19, 2024, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) documented 660 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank. These attacks resulted in Palestinian casualties in 59 incidents, damage to Palestinian-owned property in 526 incidents, and both casualties and property damage in 75 incidents.¹

Due in part to the surge in violence in the final months of the year, 2023 was the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank since 2006. Additionally, since October, the Israeli army has detained 2,280 Palestinians in the West Bank, often in response to social media posts expressing support or showing sympathy towards the situation in Gaza.²

Settlers' violent attacks represent a pattern of systematic brutality inflicted upon the Palestinian population of the West Bank, echoing the actions carried out by the Israeli army in Gaza. With support from Israeli security forces, settler violence constitutes a significant component of the Israeli state's strategy to displace Palestinians from the territory, facilitating settlement expansion despite their illegality under international law.³

The Israeli hostilities in Gaza have been accompanied by intensified violence and constraints faced by Palestinians residing in the West Bank. Virtually overnight, the

¹ [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #143, March 2024 | OCHA](#)

² [With All Eyes on Gaza, Israel Tightens Its Grip on the West Bank, November 2023 | International Crisis Group](#)

³ [Settler violence: Israel's ethnic cleansing plan for the West Bank, February 2024 | Al Jazeera](#)

territory was closed off, with many towns subjected to raids, the imposition of curfews, the detention of teenagers and others who were often reportedly subjected to beatings, while Israeli vigilantes stormed villages. Israeli settler attacks have reached unprecedented levels.⁴ Hebron, the West Bank's largest city, has long been a particularly vivid reflection of the miseries imposed on Palestinians under occupation, characterized by a pervasive atmosphere of intimidation and coercion. As elsewhere in the West Bank, in the last six months, conditions have deteriorated markedly. Daily life is marred by intensified movement restrictions, forced evictions, house demolitions, search-and-arrest operations, disrupted schooling, and the constant presence of Israeli military and settlers.⁵

Violence in the West Bank

Since October 7, 2023, a total of 422 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, with 410 attributed to Israeli forces, nine to settlers, and three to either Israeli forces or settlers. This figure includes 114 Palestinians killed since the beginning of 2024, a significant increase from 85 during the same period in 2023, the majority of whom were killed by Israeli forces. Additionally, 4,690 Palestinians have been injured, including 724 children.⁶

Since October, over 343 violent incidents have occurred, resulting in eight Palestinian fatalities, 83 injuries, and the displacement of 1,026 Palestinians from their homes. On December 15, 2023, a number of Western countries expressed deep concern regarding the escalation of extremist settler attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank. These nations, mostly affiliated with the EU, condemned these acts of violence, underscoring the illegality of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank according to international law. They called upon Israel, as the occupying power, to ensure the protection of Palestinian civilians and hold perpetrators accountable.⁷

On April 13, after an Israeli boy from a settlement was found dead, hundreds of Israeli settlers surrounded Palestinian villages and assaulted residents throughout the occupied West Bank. Incidents included setting houses and cars ablaze in the village of Duma, southeast of Nablus, gunfire in the vicinity, and forcible entry into homes, provoking clashes with Palestinians.⁸ This occurred one day after hundreds of armed Israeli settlers launched a large-scale attack on a village in the occupied West Bank, setting fire to numerous homes and cars. The assault, one of the most significant by settlers this

⁴ [With the world's eyes on Gaza, attacks are on the rise in the West Bank, which faces its own war. November 2023 | AP News](#)

⁵ [Palestinians in Hebron live in constant fear as violence surges. January 2024 | MSF](#)

⁶ [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #143, March 2024 | OCHA](#)

⁷ [Joint statement on settler violence on the West Bank. December 2023 | The Government of Sweden](#)

⁸ [Hundreds of Israeli settlers attack Palestinian villages in the occupied West Bank after missing Israeli boy found dead. April 2024 | CNN](#)

year, occurred in the village of Al-Mughayyir, east of Ramallah. At least one Palestinian man was killed by a gunshot during the violence, and approximately 25 others were injured.⁹

Displacement, Shelter, and Movement

Since the beginning of 2024, the majority of displacement in the West Bank, now at 55%, stems from home demolitions during operations conducted by Israeli forces. This is followed by displacement caused by demolitions due to the absence of Israeli-issued building permits, accounting for 38%, and displacement due to demolitions for punitive reasons, which makes up 7%.¹⁰

As of February 21, a total of 1,152 Palestinians, including 575 children, were displaced due to Israeli authorities' demolition orders or forced demolitions citing lack of building permits. Additionally, 173 Palestinians, including 70 children, faced displacement when their homes were demolished on punitive grounds. During Israeli forces' operations, 921 Palestinians, including 394 children, were displaced as 222 structures were destroyed. Furthermore, at least 1,539 Palestinians, including 756 children, were displaced in Area C due to settler violence, access restrictions, and shrinking grazing land. In Hebron's H2 area and Masafer Yatta, 200 Palestinians, including 82 children, were displaced primarily due to increased movement restrictions imposed by Israeli forces.¹¹

As of November 24, settler violence has displaced 15 Palestinian communities, totaling 111 households or 905 individuals, including 356 children, in Wadi al-Seeq and the South Hebron Hills. These areas fall within Area C, constituting 60% of the West Bank under exclusive Israeli control.¹²

A recent study by the Norwegian Refugee Council found that the Israeli discharge of wastewater also contributes to the displacement of Palestinians from their lands and increases the risk of expropriation. This action further fuels Israel's forcible transfer of Palestinians and the ongoing annexation of West Bank territory.¹³

Initial findings from a recent OCHA closure survey reveal that since October 7, 114 new closures have been installed across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. These

⁹ [Israeli settlers storm West Bank village, setting cars and homes ablaze. April 2024 | CNN](#)

¹⁰ [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #143. March 2024 | OCHA](#)

¹¹ [About 4,000 Palestinians displaced in the West Bank in 2023. February 2024 | OCHA](#)

¹² [With All Eyes on Gaza, Israel Tightens Its Grip on the West Bank, November 2023 | International Crisis Group](#)

¹³ [Ripple Effects: Exploring the environmental impact of Israeli settlements' wastewater discharge. March 2024 | NRC](#)

closures have worsened disruptions to freedom of movement, access to essential services, workplaces, and markets, as well as impeding the movement of aid workers.¹⁴

Israel controls the main highways in the West Bank, as well as the majority of roads connecting Palestinian towns and villages. Regular army checkpoints on major routes have been closed, disrupting movement, while makeshift checkpoints operated by settlers have emerged. Settler militias guarding settlements have further blockaded Palestinian villages, employing barriers such as earth mounds, cement blocks, and iron gates, often alongside their checkpoints. This has resulted in a situation where Palestinians traveling on these roads are constantly at risk of attack.¹⁵

Health and Education

The World Health Organization documented 403 attacks on healthcare in the West Bank between October 7 and March 12, where 11 people were killed, 69 people were injured, 48 health facilities were affected, and 275 ambulances were damaged.¹⁶

Operational healthcare facilities in the West Bank face challenges such as financial constraints, medicine shortages, and limited clinic operations due to reduced salaries for healthcare workers. Import restrictions worsen stock shortages while travel difficulties and security concerns obstruct access to healthcare. In Area C, only 120 out of 172 mobile clinic locations are accessible, with staffing shortages and access challenges rendering many non-functional. Funding shortages may lead to the cessation of services in additional locations by the end of April. Improving permit processes and coordination with authorities is crucial for comprehensive healthcare delivery.¹⁷

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, as of November 11, 2023, 24 students enrolled in schools in the West Bank were killed, with 250 students injured. Additionally, 67 students from the West Bank were detained, along with over 40 teachers and administrators. Furthermore, 27 governmental schools in the West Bank were attacked, leading to disruptions in school hours. Approximately 1,750 teachers were hindered from reaching their schools daily due to strikes and raids on population centers, resulting in a local education rate of no more than 90%.¹⁸

Israel's crackdown in the West Bank has resulted in a complete shutdown and significant disruptions to universities, exacerbating an already challenging situation.

¹⁴ [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #152, April 2024 | OCHA](#)

¹⁵ [With All Eyes on Gaza, Israel Tightens Its Grip on the West Bank, November 2023 | International Crisis Group](#)

¹⁶ [Impact of health attacks in the West Bank, March 2024 | WHO](#)

¹⁷ [WEST BANK HEALTH CLUSTER PARTNERS UPDATE 03, March 2024 | Health Cluster](#)

¹⁸ [The Impact of the Israeli Occupation Aggression on the Right to Education in Palestine, November 2023 | PCBS](#)

The ongoing aggression has caused a devastating setback to Palestinian higher education in the long term. In the West Bank, universities were forced to transition to online learning when the war began on October 7th, initially causing disruptions to movement between different zones within the territory. Overseas academics have fled, while many nonlocal students find themselves stranded in the West Bank. Furthermore, international conferences have been canceled as a result of the violence.¹⁹

The prestigious Birzeit University in the West Bank, which has shifted to virtual classes, has been subjected to two Israeli army raids in three months. These raids resulted in the arrest of students and teachers, with others also targeted by settlers.²⁰ Al-Quds University, renowned for its medical programs, typically conducts around 70% of its teaching in clinics or laboratories. However, due to current circumstances, the university has shifted to delivering theoretical instruction, which poses challenges in an environment with limited internet connectivity. For students able to attend classes, maintaining focus is proving to be extremely difficult.²¹

Additionally, six students from Birzeit University have been arrested, adding to a total of 85 students currently detained by Israeli authorities, some under "administrative detention," where they are held without trial—a practice so prevalent that the university has a protocol for reintegrating such students into the classroom.²²

Economic Situation

According to the World Bank, the per capita gross domestic product in the West Bank stands at only \$4,500 per year. In contrast, just across the border in Israel, this figure reaches nearly \$55,000.²³ The recent eruption of hostilities has increased challenges faced by Palestinian institutions, including difficulties in acquiring lab equipment and frequent refusals of visas for students and scholars.²⁴

Since October 7th, Israel implemented a ban preventing around 100,000 Palestinian laborers in the West Bank from crossing the border to work in Israel, due to security concerns. This caused a severe financial setback to the West Bank, as the wages earned by cross-border workers contribute an estimated \$5.5 billion annually, constituting

¹⁹ [Impact of health attacks in the West Bank, March 2024 | WHO](#)

²⁰ [West Bank's most prestigious university once again navigates teaching during wartime, January 2024 | LeMonde](#)

²¹ [Palestinian Campuses Head Into Abyss as Israeli Retaliation Grows, October 2023 | Inside Higher Ed](#)

²² [Palestinian Campuses Head Into Abyss as Israeli Retaliation Grows, October 2023 | Inside Higher Ed](#)

²³ [The West Bank economy has been hammered by war, January 2024 | NPR](#)

²⁴ [Palestinian Campuses Head Into Abyss as Israeli Retaliation Grows, October 2023 | Inside Higher Ed](#)

about one-third of the combined economy of the West Bank and Gaza. Furthermore, Israel and the Palestinian Authority are in dispute concerning tax revenue collected by Israel on behalf of the West Bank and Gaza. Consequently, the Palestinian Authority, responsible for governing portions of the West Bank, has been compelled to reduce the wages of its 143,000 employees. These workers received no salary in October, half-pay in November, and approximately 80% of their wages in December.²⁵

Nilin, a city in the West Bank, once a shopping destination for Israelis seeking lower prices, now faces a stark reality: supermarket prices surged by 30% due to transportation and supplier costs, resulting in a 70% decrease in sales. With a third of its 6,400 residents previously employed in Israel, all lost their jobs post-October 7th, leading to a 40% drop in commercial revenue. Across the West Bank, unemployment has soared to a third of the workforce, up from 13% before the war, while government employee salaries have been cut, and intermittent checkpoint closures have hindered commerce. The Palestinian economy contracted by over a fifth in the last quarter of 2023, with a third of businesses reducing production or shutting down entirely, resulting in daily losses of \$25 million.²⁶

Livelihoods

In the 2023 season, Palestinian farmers experienced a significant loss of over 1,200 metric tons of olive oil, equating to a direct financial setback of US\$10 million. This impact was particularly severe in the northern governorates of Tulkarm, Qalqilya, and Nablus. During September-November, OCHA recorded 113 harvest-related cases of Israeli settlers attacking Palestinians, damaging their trees, or stealing crops and harvesting tools. Ten incidents resulted in casualties and property damage, another ten caused casualties without property damage, and 93 incidents resulted in damage but no casualties. Over 2,000 trees were vandalized during these events, with the highest number of incidents occurring in the governorates of Nablus and Ramallah. OCHA estimates that in 2023, over 10,000 Palestinian-owned olive trees were vandalized across the West Bank, presumably by settlers.²⁷

Since October 7, 2023, over 1,240 Palestinians, including around 600 children, from at least 20 herding communities have faced displacement due to settler violence and access restrictions.²⁸ The increase in settler attacks has left many farmers unable to access

²⁵ [The West Bank economy has been hammered by war. January 2024 | NPR](#)

²⁶ [The economy of this Palestinian village depended on Israel. Then the checkpoint closed. February 2024 | AP News](#)

²⁷ [Olive harvest 2023: hindered access afflicts Palestinian farmers in the West Bank. February 2024 | OCHA](#)

²⁸ [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | OCHA Flash Update #144. March 2024 | OCHA](#)

their lands or has led to the destruction of their crops.²⁹ All Palestinian workers in Israel lost their livelihoods upon being banned from entering the territories. In February, some families reported that they had depleted their savings and were accumulating debt at supermarkets, resorting to selling heirlooms to afford food.³⁰

On February 8, Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian shepherds grazing their herds near Hebron in the occupied West Bank, driving them away from the pasture and using drones to frighten their livestock. This led to severe losses for the shepherds, as many of their animals experienced miscarriages and stillbirths during lambing season. Human rights defenders characterize such incidents as part of settler "economic warfare," which contributes to displacement among Palestinian communities.³¹

Over the past two years, OCHA has recorded a minimum of 100 settler attacks on Palestinian farmers and herders in the vicinity of Al Mughayyir village. These attacks have led to the displacement of two nearby Bedouin communities, totaling 220 people. The most recent displacement incident occurred on October 15, 2023.³²

Laboratory analysis conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council at two sites, Wadi Shakhit in Hebron and near the Immanuel industrial zone in Qalqilya, suggest recent contamination from sewage or animal waste. The regular discharge of wastewater from Israeli settlements into vital water systems and agricultural lands in the West Bank has a detrimental impact. This compounds environmental hazards, worsens the fragile Palestinian economy, and increases the risk of diseases. Farming communities have also reported a significant decline in income due to untreated wastewater discharge, resulting in reduced crop yields and challenges in marketing produce due to sewage contamination. Some farmers stated that they have lost up to 70% of their total olive tree harvest compared to pre-discharge periods. Additionally, affected farming communities reported a substantial decrease of 50-70% in annual income from agriculture. Wastewater has substantially submerged some farmers' land and left a salt layer covering the soil causing a 50% drop in the olive trees' yield.³³

Anera's Response

²⁹ [With All Eyes on Gaza, Israel Tightens Its Grip on the West Bank, November 2023 | International Crisis Group](#)

³⁰ [The economy of this Palestinian village depended on Israel. Then the checkpoint closed. February 2024 | AP News](#)

³¹ [Settler violence: Israel's ethnic cleansing plan for the West Bank, February 2024 | Al Jazeera](#)

³² [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #153, April 2024 | OCHA](#)

³³ [West Bank: Israeli settlement wastewater destroys Palestinian lands and livelihoods, March 2024 | NRC.](#)

As assaults on the West Bank intensify, and as civilian movements are continuously hindered by closures and restrictions, Anera will look towards the implementation of mobile clinics to ensure ease of access for those affected by the ongoing war. Anera plans to mobilize its resources in [support of partner organizations](#), including the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, as a means of providing medical supplies and services for displaced individuals and communities. Anera also plans to reconnect displaced communities to disrupted WASH services, including clean water access and proper sewage infrastructure, in response to ongoing violence and associated restrictions in movement.